

Soldiers of the State: Reconsidering American Civil-Military Relations

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In American academe today the dominant view of civil-military relations is sternly critical of the military, asserting that civilian control of the military is dangerously eroded.¹ Though tension clearly exists in the relationship, the current critique is largely inaccurate and badly overwrought. Far from overstepping its bounds, America's military operates comfortably within constitutional notions of separated powers, participating appropriately in defense and national security policymaking with due deference to the principle of civilian control. Indeed, an active and vigorous role by the military in the policy process is and always has been essential to the common defense.

A natural starting point for any inquiry into the state of civil-military relations in the US today is to define what is meant by the terms "civil-military relations" and "civilian control." Broadly defined, "civil-military relations" refers to the relationship between the armed forces of the state and the larger society they serve—how they communicate, how they interact, and how the interface between them is ordered and regulated. Similarly, "civilian control" means simply the degree to which the military's civilian masters can enforce their authority on the military services.²

Clarifying the vocabulary of civil-military relations sheds an interesting light on the current, highly charged debate. The dominant academic critique takes several forms, charging that the military has become increasingly estranged from the society it serves;³ that it has abandoned political neutrality for partisan politics;⁴ and that it plays an increasingly dominant and illegitimate role in policymaking.⁵ This view contrasts the ideal of the non-partisan, apolitical soldier with a different reality. In this construct, the mili-

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tary operates freely in a charged political environment to “impose its own perspective” in defiance of the principle of civilian control.⁶ The critique is frequently alarmist, employing terms like “ominous,”⁷ “alienated,”⁸ and “out of control.”⁹ The debate is strikingly one-sided; few civilian or military leaders have publicly challenged the fundamental assumptions of the critics.¹⁰ Yet as we shall see, the dominant scholarly view is badly flawed in its particulars, expressing a distorted view of the military at work in a complex political system that distributes power widely.

The Civil-Military Gap

The common assertion that a “gap” exists which divides the military and society in an unhealthy way is a central theme. Unquestionably, the military as an institution embraces and imposes a set of values that more narrowly restricts individual behavior. But the evidence is strong that the public understands the necessity for more circumscribed personal rights and liberties in the military, and accepts the rationale for an organizationally conservative outlook that emphasizes the group over the individual and organizational success over personal validation.

The tension between the conservative requirements of military life and the more liberal outlook of civil society goes far back before the Revolution to the early days of colonial America’s militia experience. Though it has waxed and waned, it has remained central to the national conversation about military service.¹¹ The issue is an important one: the military holds an absolute monopoly on force in society, and how to keep it strong enough to defend the state and subservient enough not to threaten it is the central question in civil-military relations. Most commentators assume that this difference in outlook poses a significant problem—that at best it is a condition to be managed, and at worst a positive danger to the state. As a nation, however, America has historically accepted the necessity for a military more highly ordered and disciplined than civil society.

While important cultural differences exist between the services and even between communities within the services,¹² the military in general remains focused on a functional imperative that prizes success in war above all else. Though sometimes degraded during times of lessened threat, this imper-

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ative has remained constant at least since the end of the Civil War and the rise of modern military professionalism. It implies a set of behaviors and values markedly different from those predominant in civil society, particularly in an all-volunteer force less influenced by large numbers of temporary conscripts.

Though the primary function of the military is often described as “the application of organized violence,” the military’s conservative and group-centered bias is based on something even more fundamental. In the combat forces which dominate the services, in ethos if not in numbers, the first-order challenge is not to achieve victory on the battlefield. Rather it is to make the combat soldier face his own mortality. Under combat conditions the existence of risk cannot be separated from the execution of task. The military culture, while broadly conforming to constitutional notions of individual rights and liberties, therefore derives from the functional imperative and by definition values collective over individual good.

The American public intuitively understands this, as evidenced by polling data which demonstrate conclusively that a conservative military ethic has not alienated the military from society.¹³ On the contrary, public confidence in the military remains consistently high, more than a quarter century after the end of the draft and the drawdown of the 1990s, both of which lessened the incidence and frequency of civilian participation in military affairs. There is even reason to believe that the principal factors cited most often to explain the existence of the “gap”—namely the supposed isolation of the military from civilian communities and the gulf between civilian and military values—have been greatly exaggerated.

The military “presence” in civil society is not confined to serving members of the active-duty military. Rather, it encompasses all who serve or have served, active and reserve. For example, millions of veterans with first-hand knowledge of the military and its value system exist within the population at large. The high incidence of married service members and an increasing trend toward off-base housing mean that hundreds of thousands of military people and their dependents live in the civilian community. Reserve component installations and facilities and the reserve soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who serve there bring the military face to face with society every day in thousands of local communities across the country. Commissioned officers, and increasingly noncommissioned officers (NCOs), regularly participate in civilian educational programs, and officer training programs staffed by active, reserve, and retired military personnel are found on thousands of college and high school campuses. Military recruiting offices are located in every sizable city and town. Many military members even hold second jobs in the private sector. At least among middle-class and working-class Americans, the military is widely represented and a part of everyday life.¹⁴

Just as the military's isolation from society is often overstated, differences in social attitudes, while clearly present, do not place the military outside the mainstream of American life. The dangers posed by a "values gap" are highly questionable given the wide disparity in political perspectives found between the east and west coasts and the American "heartland"; between urban, suburban, and rural populations; between north and south; between different religious and ethnic communities; and between social and economic classes. It may well be true that civil society is more forgiving than the military for personal failings like personal dishonesty, adultery, indebtedness, assault, or substance abuse. But society as a whole does not condone these behaviors or adopt a neutral view. To the extent that there are differences, they are differences of degree. On fundamental questions about the rule of law, on the equality of persons, on individual rights and liberties, and on civilian control of the military in our constitutional system, there are no sharp disagreements with the larger society. Indeed, there is general agreement about what constitutes right and wrong behavior.¹⁵ The difference lies chiefly in how these ideals of "right behavior" are enforced. Driven by the functional imperative of battlefield success, the military as an institution views violations of publicly accepted standards of behavior more seriously because they threaten the unity, cohesion, or survival of the group.¹⁶ Seen in this light, the values "gap" assumes a very different character.

To be sure, sweeping events have altered the civil-military compact. The advent of the all-volunteer force, the defeat in Vietnam, the end of the Cold War, the drawdown of the 1990s, the impact of gender and sexual orientation policies, and a host of other factors have influenced civil-military relations in important ways. The polity no longer sees military service as a requirement of citizenship during periods of national crisis, or a large standing military as a wartime anomaly. Despite such fundamental changes, over time public support for the military and its values has remained surprisingly enduring, even as the level of public participation in military affairs has declined.

The "Politicization" of the Military

Of equal or perhaps greater import is the charge that the military has abandoned its tradition of nonpartisan service to the state in favor of partisan politics. Based on apparently credible evidence that the military has embraced conservatism as a political philosophy and affiliated with the Republican Party, this view implies a renunciation of the classical, archetypal soldier who neither voted nor cared about partisan politics. Nevertheless, as with the "values gap," the charge that the US military has become dangerously politicized does not stand up to closer scrutiny. The tradition of nonpartisanship is alive and well in America's military.

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One can plausibly speculate on trends which suggest greater Republican affiliation over the past generation or so. Seven of the last ten presidential administrations have been Republican. For those with a propensity to enter the military and even more for those who choose to stay, the Republican Party is generally seen as more supportive of military pay, quality of life, and a strong defense. Since the late 1970s, the percentage of young Americans identifying themselves as Republicans rose significantly across the board.

Still, from 1976 to 1999, the number of high school seniors expecting to enter the military and self-identifying as Republicans never exceeded 40 percent and actually declined significantly from 1991 to 1999. Despite the end of the draft and the more market-inspired and occupational flavor of military service under the all-volunteer concept, new recruits “are predominantly not Republican and are less Republican than their peers who go to college.”¹⁷ Increasingly it seems clear that the young enlisted service members who make up a large proportion of the force cannot be characterized as predominantly conservative or Republican.

The figures for senior military officers are quite different; about two thirds self-identify as Republican. To some extent this reflects the attitudes of the socio-economic cohort they are drawn from, generally defined as non-minority, college educated, belonging to mainstream Christian denominations, and above average in income. On the other hand, military elites overwhelmingly shun the “far-right” or “extremely conservative” labels, are far less supportive of fundamentalist religious views, and are significantly more liberal than mainstream society as a whole on social issues.¹⁸ It is far more accurate to say that senior military leaders occupy the political center than to portray them as creatures of the right.

If the conservative orientation of the military is less clear-cut than commonly supposed, its actual impact on American electoral politics is highly doubtful. As we have seen, the attitudes and orientation of the enlisted force vary considerably. The commissioned officer corps, comprising perhaps ten percent of the force (roughly 120,000 active-duty members) and only a tiny fraction of the electorate, is not in any sense politically active. It

does not proselytize among its subordinates, organize politically, contribute financially to campaigns to any significant degree or, apparently, vote in large numbers. There is no real evidence that the military has become increasingly partisan in an electoral sense, or that it plays an important role in election outcomes. As Lance Betros has argued,

The fundamental weakness of this argument is that it ascribes to military voters a level of partisanship that is uncharacteristic of the voting public. The vast majority of people who cast votes for Democrats or Republicans are not partisans, in the sense of actively advancing the party's interests. Instead, they comprise the "party in the electorate," a much looser affiliation than the party organization. . . . [T]hese voters do not have more than a casual involvement in the party's organizational affairs and rarely interact with political leaders and activists. They are, in effect, the consumers, not the purveyors, of the party's partisan appeals and policies.¹⁹

A common criticism is that a growing tendency by retired military elites to publicly campaign for specific candidates signals an alarming move away from the tradition of nonpartisanship. But aside from the fact that this trend can be observed in favor of both parties,²⁰ not just the Republicans, evidence that documents the practical effect of these endorsements is lacking. Except in wartime, most voters cannot even identify the nation's past or present military leaders. They are unlikely to be swayed by their endorsements. Nor is there any evidence that the political actions of retired generals and admirals unduly influence the electoral or policy preferences of the active-duty military. We are in fact a far cry from the days when senior military leaders actually contended for the presidency while on active duty—a far more serious breach of civilian control.

The Military Role in the Policy Process

More current is the suggestion that party affiliation lends itself to military resistance to civilian control in policy matters, especially during periods of Democratic control. The strongest criticism in this vein is directed at General Colin Powell as a personality and gays in the military as a policy issue, with any number of prominent scholars drawing overarching inferences about civil-military relations from this specific event.²¹ This tendency to draw broad conclusions from a specific case is prevalent in the field but highly questionable as a matter of scholarship. The record of military deference to civilian control, particularly in the recent past, in fact supports a quite different conclusion.

Time and again in the past decade, military policy preferences on troop deployments, the proliferation of nontraditional missions, the draw-

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down, gender issues, budgeting for modernization, base closure and realignment, and a host of other important issues were overruled or watered down. Some critics, most notably Andrew Bacevich, argue that President Clinton did not control the military so much as he placated it: “The dirty little secret of American civil-military relations, by no means unique to this [Clinton] administration, is that the commander-in-chief does not command the military establishment; he cajoles it, negotiates with it, and, as necessary, appeases it.”²² This conclusion badly overreaches. Under President Clinton, military force structure was cut well below the levels recommended in General Powell’s Base Force recommendations. US troops remained in Bosnia far beyond the limits initially set by the President. Funding for modernization was consistently deferred to pay for contingency operations, many of which were opposed by the Joint Chiefs. In these and many other instances, the civilian leadership enforced its decisions firmly on its military subordinates. On virtually every issue, the military chiefs made their case with conviction, but acquiesced loyally and worked hard to implement the decisions of the political leadership.

As many scholars point out, the election of Bill Clinton in 1992 posed perhaps the most severe test of civil-military relations since the Johnson-McNamara era. Avowedly anti-military in his youth, Clinton came to office with a background and political makeup that invited confrontation with the military. His determination to open the military to gays, announced during the campaign and reiterated during the transition, provoked widespread concerns among senior military leaders. Eminent historians Russell Weigley and Richard Kohn have severely criticized the military’s role in this controversy, and in particular General Powell’s actions. Weigley cites the episode as “a serious breach of the constitutional principle of civilian control” justifying a “grave accusation of improper conduct.” Kohn characterizes it hyperbolically as “the most open manifestation of defiance and resistance by the American military since the publication of the Newburgh address. . . . [N]othing like this had ever occurred in American history.”²³

All this is poor history and even poorer political science. The presidential candidacies of Taylor, Scott, McClellan, Grant, Hancock, Wood, and MacArthur while on active duty suggest far more serious challenges to civilian control. The B36 controversy (the “Revolt of the Admirals”) in 1948 and the overt insubordination leading to the relief of MacArthur in 1952 represented direct challenges to the political survival of Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson in the first case and President Truman himself in the second. The “gays in the military” dispute was very different and much less significant in overarching national security import. A more balanced critique suggests that the controversy hardly warrants the claims made on its behalf.

The Apolitical Soldier Revisited

The characterization of General Powell as a “politician in uniform” is often contrasted with the ideal of the nonpartisan soldier modeled by Huntington. This rigidly apolitical model, typified by figures like Grant, Sherman, Pershing, and Marshall, colors much of the current debate. The history of civil-military relations in America, however, paints a different picture. Since the Revolution, military figures have played prominent political roles right up to the present day. The ban on partisanship in electoral politics, while real, is a relatively modern phenomenon. But the absence of the military from the politics of policy is, and always has been, largely a myth.

The roster of former general officers who later became President shows a strong intersection between politics and military affairs. The list includes Washington (probably as professional a soldier as it was possible to be in colonial America), Jackson, Harrison, Taylor, Grant, Hays, Garfield, and Eisenhower. (Many others had varying degrees of military service, some highly significant.)²⁴ The list of prominent but unsuccessful presidential aspirants who were also military leaders includes Scott, Fremont, McClellan, Hancock, Leonard Wood, Dewey, and MacArthur. Even in the modern era, many senior military leaders have served in high political office, while many others tried unsuccessfully to enter the political arena.²⁵ Even some of the paladins of the apolitical ideal, such as Grant, Sherman, and Pershing, benefited greatly from political patronage at the highest levels.²⁶

In attempting to reconcile an obvious pattern of military involvement in American political life to the apolitical ideal, historians have sometimes differentiated between “professional” and “nonprofessional” soldiers. The nonprofessionals, so the argument runs, can be excused for their political activity on the grounds that they were at best part-timers whose partisan political behavior did not threaten the professional ethic. Yet many commanded large bodies of troops and simultaneously embodied real political strength

and power.²⁷ Indeed, for much of American history, the military was not recognizably professional at all. Before the Civil War, American military professionalism as we understand it today did not exist.²⁸ The regular officer corps was so small, so poorly educated, and so rife with partisan politics that in time of war it was often led, not by long-service professionals, but essentially by political figures like Andrew Jackson. Even those few career soldiers who rose to the top in wartime, such as Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott, not infrequently became politicians who contended for the presidency itself—Taylor successfully, and Scott notably not.

America fought the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the Civil War using the traditional model of a small professional army and a large volunteer force, mostly led by militia officers or social and political elites with little or no military training—including many politicians (War Department policy kept Regular officers in junior grades with Regular units; few escaped to rise to high command).²⁹ By war’s end, politicians in uniform like Butler, McCleernand, and Sickles and politically ambitious generals like McClellan and Fremont had given way to more professionally oriented commanders. In the postwar period the notion of the talented amateur on the battlefield faded while the memory of the “political” generals, often acting in league with the congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War to further their own personal interests, continued to rankle. Until the turn of the century the Army would be run by professional veterans of the Civil War, particularly General Sheridan as Commanding General, and they would attempt to impose a stern ethic of political neutrality.³⁰

That this ethic heavily influenced the professional officer corps cannot be doubted—and yet the tradition of career military figures seeking political office continued.³¹ Nor did the ethic renounce active participation in the politics of military policy. Even at a time when the military-industrial complex was far less important than today, when the military share of the budget was tiny and the political spoils emanating from the military inconsequential, the military services struggled mightily with and against both the executive and legislative branches in pursuit of their policy goals. In cases too numerous to count, the military services used the linkages of congressional oversight to advance their interests and preserve their equities against perceived executive encroachment. Over time, a strong prohibition on military involvement in electoral politics evolved which remains powerfully in effect today. But the realities of separated powers, as well as the powerful linkages between defense industries, congressional members and staff, and the military services do not—and never have—allowed the military to stand aloof from the bureaucratic and organizational pulling and hauling involved in the politics of policy.

The Separatist vs. Fusionist Debate

There are essentially two competing views on the subject of the military's proper role in the politics of policy. The first holds that the military officer is not equipped by background, training, or inclination to fully participate in defense policymaking. In this view, mastering the profession of arms is so demanding and time-consuming, and the military education system so limiting, that an understanding of the policy process is beyond the abilities of the military professional.³²

Military officers are ill prepared to contribute to high policy. Normal career patterns do not look towards such a role; rather they are—and should be—designed to prepare officers for the competent command of forces in combat or at least for the performance of the highly complex subsidiary tasks such command requires. . . . [M]ilitary officers should not delude themselves about their capacity to master dissimilar and independently difficult disciplines.³³

Politics is beyond the scope of military competence, and the participation of military officers in politics undermines their professionalism, curtailing their professional competence, dividing the profession against itself, and substituting extraneous values for professional values.³⁴

Aside from the question of competence, this “separatist” critique warns of the tendency toward the militarization of foreign and defense policy should military officers be allowed to fully participate. Critics assert that given the predisposition toward bellicosity and authoritarianism cited by Huntington and others, too much influence by the military might tend to skew the policy process to favor use of force when other, less direct approaches are called for.³⁵

An alternative view, the “fusionist” or “soldier-statesman” view, holds that direct participation by military leaders in defense policy is both necessary and inevitable.

President Kennedy specifically urged—even ordered—the military, from the Joint Chiefs right down to academy cadets, to eschew “narrow” definitions of military competence and responsibilities, take into account political considerations in their military recommendations, and prepare themselves to take active roles in the policy-making process.³⁶

If the assumption of unique expertise is accurate, only the military professional can provide the technical knowledge, informed by insight and experience, needed to support high-quality national security decisionmaking. Given the certainty that military input is both needed and demanded by Congress as well as the executive branch, military advocacy cannot be avoided in recommending and supporting some policy choices over others. This school

holds that long service in this environment, supplemented by professional schooling in the tools and processes of national security, equips senior military leaders to fulfill what is, after all, an inescapable function.

These two competing perspectives mirror the “realist” and “ideal-ist” theories of politics and reflect the age-old division in political science between those who see reality “as it is” and those who see it “as it ought to be.” As we have seen, the historical record is unequivocal. Military participation in partisan politics has been inversely proportional to the growth of military professionalism, declining as the professional ethic has matured. But the role of the military in defense policymaking has endured from the beginning, increasing as the resources, complexity, and gravity which attend the field of national security have grown. The soldier statesman has not just come into his own. He has always been.

The Nature of Military Involvement in Defense Policymaking

If this is true, to what extent is such participation dangerous? Does active military involvement in defense policymaking actually threaten civilian control?

Clearly there have been individual instances where military leaders crossed the line and behaved both unprofessionally and illegitimately with respect to proper subordination to civilian authority; the Revolt of the Admirals and the MacArthur-Truman controversy already have been cited. The increasingly common tactic whereby anonymous senior military officials criticize their civilian counterparts and superiors, even to the point of revealing privileged and even classified information, cannot be justified.

Yet civilian control remains very much alive and well. The many direct and indirect instruments of objective and subjective civilian control of the military suggest that the true issue is not control—defined as the government’s ability to enforce its authority over the military—but rather political freedom of action. In virtually every sphere, civilian control over the military apparatus is decisive. All senior military officers serve at the pleasure of the President and can be removed, and indeed retired, without cause. Congress must approve all officer promotions and guards this prerogative jealously; even lateral appointments at the three- and four-star levels must be approved by the President and confirmed by Congress, and no officer at that level may retire in grade without separate approval by both branches of government. Operating budgets, the structure of military organizations, benefits, pay and allowances, and even the minutia of official travel and office furniture are determined by civilians. The reality of civilian control is confirmed not only by the many instances cited earlier where military recommendations were over-

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ruled. Not infrequently, military chiefs have been removed or replaced by the direct and indirect exercise of civilian authority.³⁷

To be sure, the military as an institution enjoys some advantages. Large and well-trained staffs, extended tenure, bureaucratic expertise, cross-cutting relationships with industry, overt and covert relationships with congressional supporters, and stability during lengthy transitions between administrations give it a strong voice. But on the big issues of budget and force structure, social policy, and war and peace, the influence of senior military elites—absent powerful congressional and media support—is more limited than is often recognized.

If this thesis is correct, the instrumentalities and the efficacy of civilian control are not really at issue. As I have suggested, political freedom of action is the nub of the problem. Hampered by constitutionally separated powers which put the military in both the executive and legislative spheres, civilian elites face a dilemma. They can force the military to do their bidding, but they cannot always do so without paying a political price. Because society values the importance of independent, nonpoliticized military counsel, a civilian who publicly discounts that advice in an area presumed to require military expertise runs significant political risks. The opposition party will surely exploit any daylight between civilian and military leaders, particularly in wartime—hence the discernible trend in the modern era away from the Curtis LeMays and Arleigh Burkes of yesteryear who brought powerful heroic personas and public reputations into the civil-military relationship.

It is therefore clear that much of the criticism directed at “political” soldiers is not completely genuine or authentic. Far from wanting politically passive soldiers, political leaders in both the legislative and executive branches consistently seek military affirmation and support for their programs and policies. The proof that truly apolitical soldiers are not really wanted is found in the pressures forced upon military elites to publicly support the policy choices of their civilian masters. A strict adherence to the apolitical model would require civilian superiors to solicit professional military advice when needed, but not to involve the military either in the decision process or in the “marketing” process needed to bring the policy to fruition.

The practice, however, is altogether different. The military position of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the service chiefs, and the combatant commanders is always helpful in determining policy outcomes. The pressures visited upon military elites to support, or at least not publicly refute, the policy preferences of their civilian masters, especially in the executive branch, can be severe. Annually as part of the budget process, the service chiefs are called upon to testify to Congress and give their professional opinions about policy decisions affecting their service. Often they are encouraged to publicly differ with civilian policy and program decisions they are known to privately question.³⁸

This quandary, partly a function of the constitutional separation of powers and partly due to party politics, drives the JCS Chairman and the chiefs to middle ground. Not wanting to publicly expose differences with the Administration, yet bound by their confirmation commitments to render unvarnished professional military opinions to Congress, military elites routinely find themselves on the horns of a dilemma. These experiences, the bread and butter of military service at the highest levels, frequently produce exasperation and frustration. The consensus among civilian critics may be that the military dominates the policy process. But the view from the top of the military hierarchy is something quite different.

Conclusion

For military officers working at the politico-military interface, the problem of civil-military relations exists in its most acute form. There is, after all, no real issue between the polity as a whole and the military as an institution. Across the country the armed forces are seen as organizations that work, providing genuine opportunities for minorities, consistent success on the battlefield and in civil support operations here at home, and power and prestige in support of American interests abroad. For most Americans the military's direct role in the interagency process and in the making of national security policy is not only permissible, it is essential to informed governance and a strong national defense.

The arguments advanced herein attempt to show that the dynamic tension which exists in civil-military relations today, while in many cases sub-optimal and unpleasant, is far from dangerous. Deeply rooted in a uniquely American system of separated powers, regulated by strong traditions of subordination to civilian authority, and enforced by a range of direct and indirect enforcement mechanisms, modern US civil-military relations remain sound, enduring, and stable. The American people need fear no challenge to constitutional norms and institutions from a military which—however aggressive on the battlefield—remains faithful to its oath of service. Not least of the Framers' achievements is the willing subordination of the soldiers of the state.

NOTES

1. The foremost proponent of the dominant critique of civil-military relations in America today is historian Richard Kohn. He is joined by Peter Feaver, Andrew Bacevich, Russell Weigley, Michael Wesch, Eliot Cohen, and others. See Richard H. Kohn, "Out of Control: The Crisis in Civil Military Relations," *The National Interest*, No. 35 (Spring 1994); "The Forgotten Fundamentals of Civilian Control of the Military in Democratic Government," John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Project on US Post Cold-War Civil-Military Relations, Working Paper No. 13, Harvard University, June 1997; and "The Erosion of Civilian Control of the Military in the United States Today," *Naval War College Review*, 55 (Summer 2002).
2. In academic parlance, "civilian control" is quite often used to mean much more, often implying unqualified deference to the executive branch. Similarly, "civil-military" relations is commonly used to mean, not the relationship of the military to society, but instead the relationship between civilian and military elites.
3. Kohn, "The Erosion of Civilian Control," p. 10.
4. See Ole R. Holsti, "A Widening Gap Between the Military and Civilian Society? Some Evidence, 1976-1996," John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Project on US Post Cold-War Civil-Military Relations, Working Paper No. 13, Harvard University, October 1997.
5. See Tom Ricks, "The Widening Gap Between Military and Society," *The Atlantic Monthly*, July 1997.
6. Kohn, "The Erosion of Civilian Control of the Military in the United States Today," p. 1.
7. See Peter Feaver and Richard H. Kohn, eds., *Soldiers and Civilians: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001), p. 1.
8. Kohn, "The Erosion of Civilian Control," p. 1.
9. Kohn, "Out of Control," p. 3.
10. Author and scholar John Hillen is the most prominent critic of the prevailing academic view of civil-military relations, while Don M. Snider charts a somewhat more moderate course; there are few others with dissenting views. See John Hillen, "The Military Ethos," *The World and I*, July 1997; "The Military Ethos: Keep It, Defend It, Manage It," *Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute*, October 1998; "The Military Culture Wars," *The Weekly Standard*, 12 January 1998; "Must U.S. Military Culture Reform?" *Orbis*, 43 (Winter 1999).
11. The most famous and influential exponent of the military conservative vs. social liberal dichotomy remains Samuel Huntington. See *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1957).
12. Don M. Snider, "The Future of American Military Culture: An Uninformed Debate on Military Culture," *Orbis*, 43 (Winter 1999), 19.
13. See Paul Gronke and Peter D. Feaver, "Uncertain Confidence: Civilian and Military Attitudes About Civil-Military Relations," paper prepared for the Triangle Institute for Security Studies "Project on the Gap Between the Military and Civilian Society," p. 1.
14. "Overall, the military remains a formidable material presence in American society. . . . [T]here is no reason based on this analysis to say the military is a peripheral or alienated institution." James Burke, "The Military Presence in American Society, 1950-2000," in Feaver and Kohn, *Soldiers and Civilians*, p. 261.
15. See Peter Kilner, "The Alleged Civil-Military Values Gap: Ideals vs. Standards," paper presented to the Joint Service Conference on Professional Ethics, Washington, D.C., 25-26 January 2001.
16. The consequences of adultery, substance abuse, failure to pay just debts, assault, lying, and so on are readily apparent when seen from the perspective of small combat units, composed principally of well-armed, aggressive young men placed in situations of extreme stress.
17. David R. Segal et al., "Attitudes of Entry-Level Enlisted Personnel: Pro-Military and Politically Mainstreamed," in Feaver and Kohn, *Soldiers and Civilians*, pp. 175-94.
18. James A. Davis, "Attitudes and Opinions Among Senior Military Officers," in Feaver and Kohn, *Soldiers and Civilians*, p. 109.
19. Lance Betros, "Political Partisanship and the Professional Military Ethic," paper submitted to the National War College, 4 May 2000, p. 23.
20. Former JCS Chairman Admiral William Crowe led 22 other retired general and flag officers in endorsing Governor Clinton during the 1992 presidential election and was rewarded with appointment to the Court of St. James as US Ambassador to Great Britain.
21. See Andrew Bacevich, "Tradition Abandoned: America's Military in a New Era," *The National Interest*, No. 48 (Summer 1997), pp. 16-25.
22. Andrew Bacevich, "Discord Still: Clinton and the Military," *The Washington Post*, 3 January 1999, p. C1.
23. See Russell Weigley, "The American Civil-Military Cultural Gap: A Historical Perspective, Colonial Times to the Present," in Feaver and Kohn, *Soldiers and Civilians*, p. 243; and Kohn, "The Erosion of Civilian Control," p. 2.

24. Harrison commanded an infantry regiment in the Civil War while McKinley served as a major; Arthur served briefly as a state quartermaster general during the Civil War; Theodore Roosevelt won fame with the Rough Riders in Cuba; Truman commanded an artillery battery in the First World War; Kennedy won the Navy Cross as a PT boat skipper in World War II; Johnson, Nixon, and Ford served as naval officers in World War II; Carter was a submarine officer for eight years; Reagan served as a public relations captain in World War II; George H. W. Bush was the youngest pilot in the Navy when he was shot down in the Pacific in World War II; and George W. Bush was an Air National Guard fighter pilot.

25. In the Truman Administration, “Ten military officers served as principal departmental officers or ambassadors” (Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier* [New York, The Free Press, 1971], p. 379). A partial list of senior officers who unsuccessfully sought high political office includes General Curtis LeMay and Admiral James Stockdale, failed vice-presidential candidates; General William Westmoreland and Brigadier General Pete Dawkins lost Senate bids. Others were more successful: former Army Chief of Staff George Marshall served as both Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense; Lieutenant General Bedell Smith was the first Director of Central Intelligence; former JCS Chairman Maxwell Taylor became Ambassador to South Vietnam; Admiral Stansfield Turner served as Director of Central Intelligence under President Carter; former JCS Chairman Admiral William Crowe was appointed Ambassador to Great Britain; former Commander, Pacific Command, Admiral Joseph Prueher became Ambassador to China; former Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James Watkins became Secretary of Energy; Brigadier General Thomas White became Secretary of the Army; and former JCS Chairman General Colin Powell is the current Secretary of State.

26. Future two-term President Ulysses S. Grant resigned his commission in disgrace before the Civil War and owed his general’s commission entirely to Congressman Elihu Washburne of Illinois. William T. Sherman was relieved of command early in the war and sent home; the remonstrations of his brother, Senator John Sherman, both then and later were crucial to his subsequent success. John J. Pershing’s marriage in 1905 to the daughter of Senator Francis E. Warren of Wyoming, the Chairman of the Senate Military Affairs Committee, and the personal sponsorship of President Theodore Roosevelt, was followed by his promotion from captain to brigadier general, ahead of more than 800 officers on the Army list.

27. In 1864 Generals Fremont, Butler, and McClellan all posed active political threats to Lincoln’s reelection. George McClellan still commanded enormous popularity in the Army of the Potomac and was favored to win the presidential election; had Sherman not taken Atlanta, even Lincoln believed that McClellan would likely win and would take the North out of the war. McClellan owed his political position entirely to his status as a senior military officer. See Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years*, Vol. III (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1939), pp. 219, 222.

28. Russell Weigley “American Military and The Principle of Civilian Control from McClellan to Powell,” *The Journal of Military History*, 57 (October 1993), 37.

29. Because the Northern armies consisted largely of federalized state volunteer units whose state governors were vital to the war effort, and because of the need to dispense patronage to ensure his continued political viability, Lincoln freely, and perhaps unavoidably for the time, commissioned political figures as general officers. A few, notably John Logan, became successful battlefield commanders. Most, however, proved notably unsuccessful and were removed or reassigned to other duties.

30. Huntington, p. 281.

31. Leonard Wood, Dewey, and MacArthur all nursed presidential aspirations and made at least exploratory attempts to frame themselves as candidates. Eisenhower resigned as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, to run for and win the presidency in 1952.

32. See Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime* (New York: The Free Press, 2002), p. 13.

33. John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturm, “Introductory Essay,” Ch.8, “The American Military: Professional and Ethical Issues,” in *American Defense Policy*, ed. John F. Reichart and Steven R. Sturm (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1982), p. 724.

34. Huntington, p. 71.

35. Reichart and Sturm, p. 723.

36. Jerome Slater, “Military Officers and Politics I,” in Reichart and Sturm, *American Defense Policy*, p. 750.

37. In the decade of the 1990s one Chief of Naval Operations was retired early following the Tailhook scandal. His successor committed suicide, troubled in part by persistent friction between senior naval officers and civilian defense officials he could not assuage. One Chief of Staff of the Air Force was relieved, and a Supreme Allied Commander in Europe and another Air Force Chief of Staff were retired early.

38. The Army Chief of Staff’s testimony on the Crusader cancellation in 2002 and postwar occupation policy in Iraq in 2003 are examples. See Robert Burns, “Rumsfeld Set to Change Army Leadership,” Associated Press, 26 April 2003.